

## **How do I establish rules and limitations for my child?**

As children grow and develop they are faced with many challenges and choices. Parents are responsible for guiding their children through these daily struggles. One way of teaching responsibility and providing children with structure is to develop clear household rules and boundaries. The developmental level and maturity of children should be considered when creating household rules. Parents should be aware that the rules should change with age and typically need to be modified once put into place. Younger children benefit from charts that will assist with rules as well as the completion of chores. Children, like adults, are motivated by internal and external rewards. Praise for positive behavior and an extra privilege will help build self-esteem, teach responsibility, and motivate them toward achieving autonomy.

It's recommended that parents involve children when establishing household rules. Children who contribute to this process are more apt to follow the guidelines created. The reasons for creating certain rules and the consequences for not following them should be clearly communicated to children in language that they understand prior to putting them into place. Posting the rules in plain view reminds forgetful children and assists parents in following through with consequences. Consistency is key when developing new rules. It's not uncommon for children to initially test the rules, but if parents remain consistent, their misbehavior will decrease.